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## BETTER THAN LAST SEASON

Reports From Various Sections of the Country Show That Trade Is Brisk.

### HARVESTING IN PROGRESS

Results Are Much Better Than Farmers Had Expected—Steel and Iron Trade Good.

New York, July 29.—The advices received this week from special agents of the International Mercantile Agency at the leading trade centers of the country are in the main satisfactory. The spirit of optimism is growing and confidence in a good fall and winter business increases from week to week. Current activity in the different industrial lines is not great, but it is better than it was a year ago with the very wholesome influence of a faith in better things. A decided reaction has occurred in the movement of stocks, but this is not due to any material change in business prospects.

There has been good growing weather for the crops which are approaching harvest under continued improved conditions. In the spring wheat sections of the northwest some rust has been discovered which will reduce the yield. Harvesting is in progress in nearly all of the leading winter wheat states, and the results are better than farmers thought they would be two weeks ago. It is beginning to be believed though, that the total yield will leave a small exportable surplus and that the price of wheat and flour during the next 12 months will be high. The speculative months are now at the top prices for this movement, having been helped by a war scare which produced an opposite effect on stocks. The returns on wheat in the southwest have stimulated business in that part of the country. Collections in the St. Louis district have far exceeded those of last year. Fall orders being received are beyond expectations.

Boots and shoes have been in especially good demand, though clothing is slow. Dallas reports bright trade prospects. The first symptoms of discouragement that has been shown at Kansas City is apparent this week in reports of a slack condition of trade in most lines. Chicago retailers are said to be more pessimistic than they ought to be in view of actual trade there, even with advance orders for clothing, men's furnishings, shoes and wearing apparel quite satisfactory. Indianapolis indicates some improvement in dry goods and shoes, though with hardware behind last year.

The most gratifying trade statements of all are those from Pittsburgh. This is due to the improvement that has come about in the iron and steel trade. The tone in this basic trade is certainly much better than it has been for a year and a sharp revival in it is not improbable after election.

### AT THE ST. LOUIS HOTEL.

An Iowa man who is at the world's fair writes home to a friend and says in part:

I am comfortably situated in the Thinside Inn, which is a pleasant little tavern about as big as Missouri valley. It is built of lath, scantling, jute bagging, wall paper and paint and is very substantial. A heavy man can climb all over it. I saw three bell boys carrying the bill for a night's lodging up to the fourth floor just now and the beams did not sag much. The management is careful though. It puts all new guests on the ground floor, and after they have paid their bills for the first day they put them on the second floor. By the time a man has paid his bill for two days he is light enough to go up on the third floor with safety. When he has stayed a week they have to put weights in his pockets to keep him from shooting up through the roof.

I got into the inn at 9 o'clock and was 86th in the line. When I got to

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the clerk he turned me upside down and shook me. Then he counted what fell out of my pockets, told me to register, and handed me a blue ticket and a bell boy.

"You have enough money for four days," he said. "Go to the cashier and settle."

My room is No. 5415, three blocks from the public square and a mile south of the buffet. When I got my receipts and my bell boy I sat down and waited an hour for a streetcar. But they told me there wasn't a line in the whole place—not even a hack line. I had to walk all the way to my room—wore out two bell boys on the way, but there's plenty more. There are more bell boys than there are guests at the inn. They use 'em for change. When you give the clerk \$5 for your room he hands you back \$2 and a bell boy.

My room is a little far away for meals, but I make it nicely. I start for supper at 9 a. m. and stop for a lunch on the way with a friend I know in room 2507. But a friend of mine who lives in room 7640 is up against it. He got two days behind with his meals living out in the country at the rear

end of the hotel. Finally he found that he was nearer to Moberly, Mo., than he was to the dining room, so now he walks over to Moberly every morning.

The inn is a fine place. They treat you right and do their best to make you feel at home. I wanted the clerk to come out and play a game of bottle pool with me this morning and he said he would just as soon as he had 99 guests taken care of. But when he got through with them there were 119 more waiting, so we had to give it up. He did not remember me this morning until I told him my name. I wonder why that was.

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